projects in Himachal Pradesh. Promotion of sustainable tourism, with emphasis on preserving the ecology is one of the salient points of Tourism policy.

Retirement age of ITDC Employees

294. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to roll back retirement age from 60 to 58 years for ITDC employees;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government are considering a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) for its employees; and

(c) if the answer to part (a) and (b) be in positive, the details thereof and how many employees are expected to exit from the organisation by these two steps during the year?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) As per information given by ITDC, approximately, 1200 employees comprising of 200 executives and 1000 non-executives are likely to opt for Voluntary Retirement Scheme. As regards number of employees expected to exit due to rolling back retirement age, the information is not readily available and it can be estimated only on fixing up a cut off date for effecting roll back of retirement age. The Company has proposed that Roll back of retirement age should be given priority over introduction of Voluntary Retirement Scheme.

Duping of Foreign Tourists

†295. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that incidents of cheating, molestation, beating and fraud with the foreign tourists in the country have been increased too much;

(b) if so, the city-wise and year-wise details of such incidents during the last three years; and

(c) what action are being taken by Government to check these incidents?

†Origional notice of the question was received in Hindi

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Cheating, molestation, beating, fraud etc. is a law and order subject of the State/U.T. Administrations. However, Ministry of Tourism in order to inculcate confidence in tourists visiting India, regularly takes up reported cases with the concerned authorities on top priority basis.

As per information available the number of tourist complaints during the last three years is as under:—

Year	No. of Complaints
1997	117
1998	100
1999	103

Development of tourism in NE region

296. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of integrated development plan formulated for North-East as envisaged in PM's new initiative for North Eastern Region 1996 indicating the list of the tourist circuits already finalised/operated;

(b) the project-wise amount allocated, utilized and achievements made during the last three years; and

(c) the details of investment proposed for development of tourism infrastructure during Ninth Plan in the region?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) As per the Prime Minister's initiatives on the North East, The Department of Tourism has taken the following steps to promote and develop tourism in the North Eastern region which also includes the travel circuit: Guwahati-Kaziranga-Shillong-Tawang

- 10% or the plan budget of the Department of Tourism has been earmarked for development of North East region.
- The Department of tourism has set up a Task Force on the North East and the recommendations of the Task Force are being followed up for development of tourism in these areas.